

## SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN HEALTH DISTRICT



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October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

The continuation of the H1N1 pandemic and the public health response to counter it has proved challenging. Though the illness has been in most cases mild, there have been some fatalities associated with complications. Thank you for partnering with local, state, and federal public health agencies to serve as our frontline public health partners providing reassuring information and direct vaccination services to your patients.

As you know, the delivery of vaccine against the H1N1 virus has been delayed. Some facilities have received partial orders, but widespread availability is still pending. The most current status report is that many more doses are in transit, and should be delivered by the end of the week.

In the last few weeks, the first available doses in the community have been in the form of the LAIV preparation, which was not recommended for pregnant women, one of the priority groups at risk for complications from H1N1 infection, so it was administered to the health care workers who serve pregnant women.

As more H1N1 vaccine becomes available, it is recommended that postpartum units of all hospital systems, birthing centers, and midwives or others performing home deliveries institute standard policies or even standing delegation orders (SDO's) to provide the H1N1 vaccine to postpartum mothers before discharge from services, if they have not been previously vaccinated. The rationale for this policy would be to protect both the mother and the newborn, both of whom would still be in the highest risk categories. Either of the inactivated or the LAIV preparations could be used for this purpose.

It is likely that most hospitals or other large health systems will address this within their own infection control groups. Should consultation with our local health department be required, please notify the H1N1 assistant liaison for healthcare, Dr John Nava, at 210-207-8823, or H1N1 Safety Officer, Dr. Jorge Flores, at 210-207-8805.

Sincerely,

Fernando A. Guerra, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P.  
Director of Health